

## SUMMARY – AN ACT RELATIVE TO CHARTER SCHOOLS IN UNDERPERFORMING DISTRICTS

The goal of this legislation is to foster the creation and expansion of successful charter schools that serve high-need students in the Commonwealth's lowest-performing districts. The bill accomplishes this by: (1) increasing the current, statutory limitation on a district's net school spending for charter schools from 9 to 18% in the lowest-scoring 10% of districts, as measured by MCAS results; and (2) by authorizing proven providers to apply to *open a new charter school* or *expand an existing charter school* in these districts.

### Eligible Charter School Operators

Under the bill, in order to be eligible to apply for a new or expanded charter, an applicant must have a record of operating at least one school that has demonstrated *academic success* and *organizational viability* while serving students from among the following subgroups:

- Students from low-income families;
- Students receiving special education;
- Students with limited English proficiency;
- Students scoring in sub-proficient categories on the MCAS or a similar measure;
- Students who have dropped out of school or are determined to be at-risk of dropping out; or
- Other at-risk students.

In its application to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, an eligible applicant must provide: (1) a *recruitment plan*, which describes strategies the school will use to attract and retain students from the categories listed above; and (2) a *student retention plan*, which describes strategies the school will use to maximize the number of students who successfully complete all school requirements at the charter school.

### Recruitment Requirements for New and Expanded Charters

Under the bill, charter schools that are granted authorization are required to:

- Develop a plan for recruiting the categories of students listed above;
- Develop enrollment goals for the categories of students listed above; and
- Submit an annual report to the Board detailing progress toward the enrollment goals.

In order to maximize charter school providers' ability to recruit and serve the categories of students listed above, the school district in which the charter school is located is required to provide to a third party mail house the addresses for all eligible students in the district. Each charter school authorized under the bill is then required to supply a mailing to the third party mail house written in the most prevalent languages of the district, to the extent feasible, and pay for it to be copied and mailed to families in targeted neighborhoods.

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